
San Angelo's low in cost but high in value, Forbes says

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San Angelo's low in cost but high in value, Forbes says

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Forbes magazine has published a list of "America's Best Cheap Cities," and San Angelo is No. 77. The author, Zack O'Malley Greenberg, writes that the nation's 380 "metropolitan statistical areas," as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, were compared on a number of measures, from the cost of housing to crime and culture.

The first task was to determine the 100 cheapest metro areas. Cities such as Austin, renowned for its music and culture, didn't make the list because of the cost factor — not cheap enough.

The 100 that made the list were then compared based on quality-of-life issues: crime rate, unemployment rate, average salary and culture.

In Texas the highest ranking metropolitan area is Fort Worth-Arlington at No. 7. The Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood metropolitan area is ranked No. 50.

The best cheap city in the country is Manchester-Nashua, N.H.

Phil Neighbors, president of the San Angelo Chamber of Commerce, was diplomatic about the report.

"This is good news because any independent study that names us in a positive light will be noted by prospective residents and business decision-makers," he said. "We're very aware of our relatively low cost of living, but it's good to know that we've been ranked highly in these factors that are important to current and future residents."

This isn't the first time Forbes has included San Angelo in a ranking. The city was No. 140 in the magazine's "Best Small Places for Business and Careers" report, published in March.

The "Best Cheap Cities" list includes Amarillo and Abilene, with Amarillo lagging San Angelo at No. 82 and Abilene just ahead at No. 71. Lubbock, Midland, Odessa and El Paso didn't make the cut.

"We don't worry about who we rate ahead of or behind," Neighbors said, "but we're happy to have independent verification."

It could always be worse. San Angeloans can be glad the city didn't get named to Forbes' "America's Most Miserable Cities," published in February and topped by Detroit.

Best Cheap Cities in Texas

1. Fort Worth-Arlington (No. 7)
2. Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood (50)
3. Beaumont-Port Arthur (62)
4. College Station-Bryan (64)
5. Tyler (70)
6. Abilene (71)
7. San Angelo (77)
8. Waco (79)
9. Amarillo (82)
10. Wichita Falls (94)
11. Brownsville-Harlingen (100)

America's Best Cheap Cities

1. Manchester-Nashua, N.H.
2. Ogden-Clearfield, Utah
3. Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., Bloomington, Wis.
4. Worcester, Mass.
5. Ann Arbor, Mich.
6. Albany-Schenectady-Troy, N.Y.
7. Fort Worth-Arlington
8. Durham-Chapel Hill, N.C.

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9. Fort Collins-Loveland, Colo.
 10. Pittsburgh
- Source: Forbes magazine